

STAR BUILDER
Broomfield, Colorado
May 19, 1960

Does Everybody Research Lung Cancer?

Underscored headline on a publicity handout arriving at this office: TB ASSOCIATION WARNS AGAINST CIGARETTES AS HEALTH THREAT! Scary enough to make you take notice, but perhaps not for the obvious reasons.

The item came from the National Tuberculosis association, a widely respected voluntary organization with a long stream of research feats in its wake. Here are some quotes:

"A warning to all people of the risk of the development of lung cancer from smoking was issued yesterday by the National Tuberculosis Association.

"The association, which includes all respiratory diseases in its program, says . . .

"There is an alarming increase in deaths from lung cancer."

The warnings are timely; they have been played up in major newspapers across the country from time to time, and they no-doubt should be studied.

But the point now is, who anteed up the shekels that guild-ed the path to these bold proclamations?

We'd been under the impression the National Cancer Society was a main cog in the country's cancer study wheel. It too is a long respected voluntary association which has many accomplishments to its credits. And it too is financed by yearly contributions from millions of Americans.

And there are the American Public Health Association and the U. S. Public Health service who also dig into the mysterious depths of this dread disease.

It gives us comfort to know that so many groups have our health at heart. But it is a little uncomfortable to think that perhaps our hard-earned donations are going to various societies each working on the same health menace. And each of them do have some personnel whose income causes some eyebrow lifting.

It reminds us of one of the first statements by the March of Dimes, following the advent of Dr. Salk's miraculous polio vaccine: "March of Dimes donations now will help in other fields of medical science."

In other words, "Don't stop the flow of dollars; we'll find some other use for them." Real fine, but we could do without duplication.

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Tobacco Group Issues Reply to T. B. Association

The following statement was issued yesterday by Timothy V. Hartnett, chairman of the Tobacco Industry Research Committee, in connection with news stories about a statement by the National Tuberculosis Association:

"The National Tuberculosis Association's statement on cigarettes gives no evidence but repeats the widely-questioned opinions of others who rely on statistics rather than on experimental evidence. It ignores the fact that even the statistical claims are disputed by recognized medical authorities.

"Surely, some members of the N. T. A. must remember that not too long ago there were charges that cigarette smoking caused tuberculosis, but these opinions were abandoned when science discovered the real cause of tuberculosis, thus leading to prevention and a cure.

"Discoveries of this kind have brought about the tremendous decline in this country of deaths from major lung ailments from about 430 per 100,000 population in 1900 to around 62 per 100,000 in 1958.

"An analytical and original approach to the lung cancer problem by the National Tuberculosis Association could contribute significantly toward a solution of this disease.